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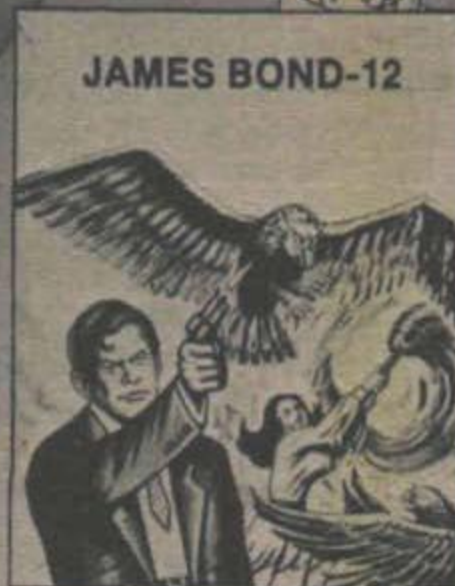
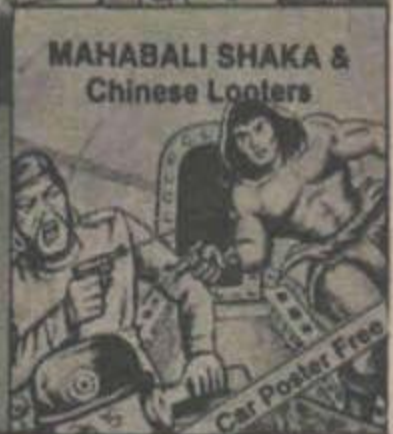
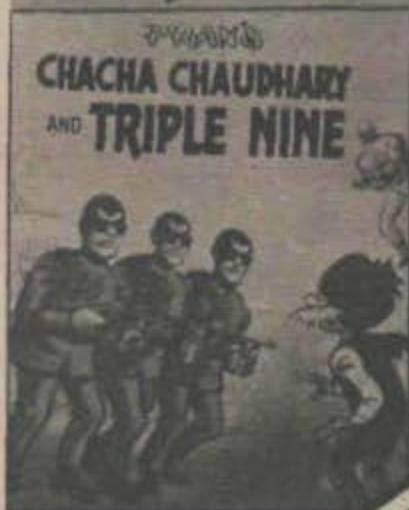
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
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**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 23 APRIL 1993 No. 10

SHATAMALAR : The month-long Holi celebrations in Maninagar are about to end. Raja Pushyavarma is distributing the prizes, many of which are claimed by Thangal and his team belonging to the Tangkul tribe. Before they take leave of the Raja and Princess Priyamvada, Thangal hands over a bunch of exotic flowers to her. They are seeing them for the first ever time. The Raja and the princess are eager to have the flowers grown in the royal garden. Commander Ghambhir Singh finds that they are known as 'Shatamalar', one that blooms once in hundred years. The Raj Guru has misgivings. **A NEW SERIAL STARTS!**

VEER HANUMAN : Vibhishana and the Vanaras are dumbstruck when they realise that Mahiravana has spirited away Rama and Lakshmana. Hanuman reaches Patala in search of them, and learns from Swarchala that only Chandrasena, whom Mahiravana wishes to marry, knows his secrets. Chandrasena obliges him.

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Founder:
CHAKRAPANI

Time To Restore Human Values

Our country has just recovered from the holocaust of communal disturbances, of a proportion not seen since the days of the Partition just before and after India achieved Independence forty-five years ago.

The cause then was purely political. A new nation was being given a shape and size after it was carved out of a political entity that had existed for nearly five thousand years of known history. The basis, of course, was religion, but a division had become a political necessity, and the people reconciled themselves to the reality, of a separate nation peopled by their brethren.

Ever since then, they expected the country to enjoy peace and tranquility, and friendship and brotherhood among themselves. The country's history told them that despite apparent diversities among them because of the geographical vastness of the nation and consequent differences in their ways of life, there was an inherent unity among them. This unity was attributed to the strength of the culture that had developed in the country over the centuries.

If so, why should man hate man? It is universally accepted that violence erupts because there is violence in the hearts and minds of the people. No wonder, then, that there is scant respect for human life, and people are not afraid of divine retribution, as every religion warns them.

The time has, therefore, come for a war—a veritable fight to restore human values and uphold all cherished values. If the grown-ups have proved themselves to be beyond redemption, it will then be the duty of the growing generation to fight this war. This is a challenge they have to take up.

It is the country's first citizen, President Shankar Dayal Sharma, who the other day reminded students that our heritage of thought from time immemorial comprised "oneness, compassion, objectivity of mind, non-violence, and service".

It is only by "undergoing unhappiness that one can experience happiness," he had stressed. The country has suffered much unhappiness in recent times. Time the country forgot all that for the sake of happiness in the days to come.

TWO NEW NATIONS

Bells pealed on the night of December 31 to ring out the old year and to ring in the New Year. Bells pealed in Prague and Bratislava at the same time to announce the birth of two "new" republics—Czech and Slovakia. Their birth indicated the disappearance of Czechoslovakia as a single entity from the map of the world. Twenty days later, the two republics were admitted to the United Nations as full-fledged members, taking its strength to 180.

Czechoslovakia came into existence in 1918 following the collapse of the Austrian empire. Bohemia, Moravia, and parts of Silesia and Ruthenia, which were all in Austrian possession, merged to form a new nation. Its leaders were Thomas Garrigue Masaryk and Edvard Benes. Statesman Masaryk became President the same year and held office till 1935. Benes succeeded him.

By then the expansionist ambitions of Adolf Hitler turned him towards Czechoslovakia, and he was allowed by Britain, France, and Italy to annex the Sudetenland region in 1938. The next year he overran the entire country, prior to marching into Poland in September, to spark off the Second World War. Benes then ran a government-in-exile in London.

Following the defeat of Nazi Germany by the Allies in 1945, bringing the war to a close in the West, the country came under the influence of the Soviet Union. In 1948, the Communists came to power under the leadership of Antonin Novotny. The war-shattered economy prompted the people to press for liberalisation. This culminated in the overthrow of Novotny. The reformists led by Alexander Dubcek came to power in 1968. However, his reforms were too extreme for the "Big Brother" to tolerate. The Warsaw Pact force, led by the U.S.S.R., occupied Czechoslovakia and Dubcek



resigned. Winds of change had since been blowing in that European nation.

The population was two-thirds Czech, while the rest comprised Slovaks, Germans, Poles, Hungarians, and other minorities. They felt they were being stifled by the majority group and, naturally, wished for separation and an independent status. On July 17, 1992, the Slovak republic of the Federation declared its sovereignty. As a majority of Slovaks were not in favour of separation, it was proposed that a final decision should come only after a referendum in the two republics. However, in November, the national parliaments of the republics rejected the proposal and simultaneously called upon the Federal Parliament to adopt amendments to the constitution for the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Federation. The Federal Parliament approved of the split as from the New Year.

On January 15, the Foreign Ministers from Prague and Bratislava reached New York to submit their applications to the U.N. On their admission, Mr. Milan Knazko said: "On this solemn day, we have entered a new stage in the history of Slovakia." And Mr. Josef Zieleniec remarked: "The Czech republic will try to contribute its modest share to the principles of human rights and freedoms."



A Movement for Boys



It is said, no one has done so much in the service of youth as Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scout Movement. His mother, Henrietta Smyth, was the third wife of Professor Baden-Powell. Robert was her fifth son, born in 1857. A keen nature lover, the professor often took the boys on outings, explaining to them about animals and plant life. When he died, their mother knew how much they would miss him. So, whenever time permitted, she would take them on expeditions to the nearby forests and fields. The children spent their vacations with their grandfather, Admiral Smyth. At his house, each of them was given a small garden which he or she was expected to keep trim.

At school, Robert took a keen interest in all extra activities, like theatricals, woodcraft, and Cadet Corps. When he could not join either Balliol or Christchurch College, he accepted his eldest brother's suggestion and joined the army "to pursue travel and adventure"! At Sandhurst he was selected at No.2 position! Not only that. He was even exempted from passing the various examinations. He was commissioned straight away and joined the 13th Hussars then stationed in Lucknow, India, where his scouting tactics

and skill in surveying greatly impressed Colonel Baker Russell. When the regiment moved to Durban, Africa, the Colonel asked him to prepare maps of the area between Natal and Transvaal, which were 600 miles apart. Robert was back in thirty days with a complete set of maps.

On his retirement, he updated his book *Aids to Scouting*, naming it *Scouting for Boys*, which gave an account of the organization he had in mind. In 1907, twenty-five boys—half of them from public schools and the rest from the poorer classes—camped in Brownsea Island, led by Major-General Baden-Powell. This experiment was transformed into the Boy Scout Movement the next year. It is now a worldwide organisation.

NEWS FLASH

Fa-hien, not Columbus

The world believes that it was the Italian navigator, Christopher Columbus, who discovered America 500 years ago. There were celebrations in several world capitals on October 12 last year to commemorate the 500th anniversary of that historic event. Not even a month had passed after the celebrations when a visiting Chinese researcher from the U.S.A., who was studying the autobiography of Fa-hien (336-422), the Chinese Buddhist monk who had also visited India in search of Buddhist teachings, revealed that the monk had set foot in the kingdom of Yepoti in A.D. 412—more than a thousand years before Columbus. According to Mr. Lian Yunshan, Yepoti existed on the western coast of the United States, somewhere near Los Angeles. The researcher made this claim at an international symposium, quoting evidences from the 1,500 year old autobiography preserved in a library in China.



A 'date-d' memory

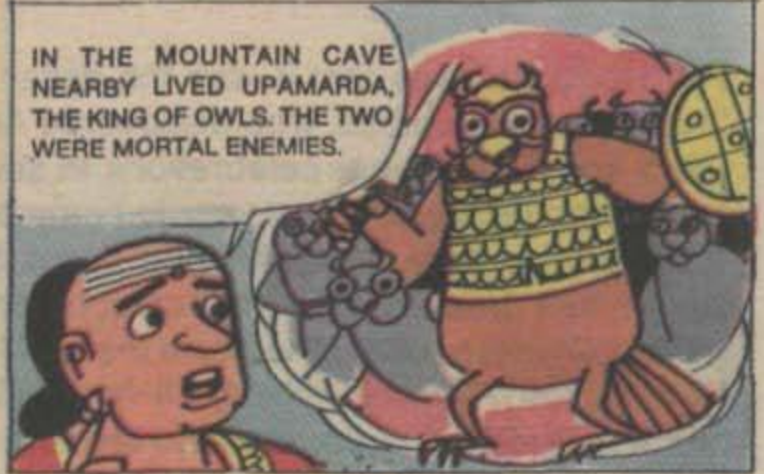
What day was the Republic Day this year? Tuesday. What day was January 1? Friday. What day was January 1, 1990? No, don't run for an old calendar. Ask 5-year old Anish Natarajan of Erode. He won't take more than a second to tell you it was a Monday. No wonder, he has come to be known as the calendar boy. You may ask him about November 1 this year. The calendar in his memory will help him answer in a split second: Monday. It was just about a year ago. Anish was listening to a conversation in his family

when a probable auspicious date for a wedding was being chosen: and he correctly named the day. His relatives tested him with several dates and he was right every time. It will be interesting to watch how he will sharpen or expand his uncanny talent, in the days to come.

Solo to South Pole

When Erling Kagge of Norway skied to the North Pole in 1990, he had a friend for company. After a 50-day trek alone, this 29-year-old adventurous lawyer reached the South Pole in the first week of January this year—to become the first person to ski to South Pole solo. He completed the 1,310 km journey ten days ahead of schedule, skiing on an average 26 km a day, pulling a sled with 120 kg of essential supplies.





The mother who hears her son being called "a wise man" will have more joy than she had at his birth.

— Thirukkural

AFTER SOME TIME...



LET UDDEEPI OUR WISE COUNSELLOR SPEAK FIRST.

O! KING! HE'S A POWERFUL ENEMY; LET'S MAKE PEACE WITH HIM.



A CLOUD CAN'T STAND AGAINST THE WIND. HE WHO BOWS HIS HEAD BEFORE THE STRONG IS SAFE.



WHAT'S YOUR OPINION, SANDEEPI?



SIR! I DISAGREE WITH UDDEEPI'S OPINION. WE CAN'T MAKE PEACE WITH ONE WHO NEVER HONOURS AGREEMENTS.



WE MUST FIGHT HIM AND SOMEHOW VANQUISH HIM.



BY SOME RUSE EVEN, AS BHEEMASENA KILLED KEECHAKA.



WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE, ADEEPI?



THE ENEMY IS WICKED AND STRONG. WE SHOULD NOT FIGHT WITH HIM, NOR MAKE PEACE WITH HIM.

THEN, WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?



LET'S LEAVE THIS PLACE AND GO AWAY.

Those who abstain from food are great, next only to those who tolerate the uncourteous speech of others.



WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE, PRODEEPI?

I DON'T AGREE WITH ADEEPI.



IT'S RIDICULOUS TO LEAVE ONE'S OWN PLACE.



A CROCODILE IS POWERFUL IN WATER, BUT WHEN IT COMES OUT, EVEN A DOG CAN MAKE IT TREMBLE.



ONE'S NATIVE PLACE IS HIS FORTRESS; HE'S STRONG THERE. SO, LET'S STICK TO OUR BASE AND FIGHT.



WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST, CHIRANJIVI?



I SUGGEST ALLIANCE AS THE BEST COURSE.



EVEN FIRE CAN'T LAST LONG WITHOUT THE AID OF WIND. SO, LET'S SEEK A POWERFUL ALLY TO OVERCOME THE ENEMY.



VENERABLE SIR! YOU'RE THE OLDEST AND THE WISEST AMONG US ALL. PRAY HELP US WITH YOUR COUNSEL.



YES! EVERY SUGGESTION HAS ITS OWN MERITS, BUT NOT ONE OF THEM IS SUITABLE NOW.

SO, SIR! WHAT'S THE REMEDY?

DUPLCITY ALONE WILL SERVE OUR PURPOSE NOW.



Humility and sweetness of speech are the ornaments of man; anything else is no ornament.



To Continue

All the wealth acquired with perseverance by the worthy is for the exercise of benevolence.





(Old Kamala at the Magic Palace is instructed to get ready Vidyavati to go on a long journey. She is at her wit's end, as the princess is missing. She makes maid Malini to travel in the palanquin, which on its way through the jungle is noticed by Vidyavati and Mahendranath. Is someone impersonating her? wonders Vidyavati. The palanquin is met not by the master as Kamala is expecting, but by someone else. Malini is shifted to another palanquin, while Kamala is sent back. Mahendranath and Vidyavati reach the hermit's hut, where he receives them with affection.)

Mahendranath and Vidyavati were taken by surprise when the hermit announced that he would accompany them to Veergiri. If they went by themselves, they might be easily recognised, the hermit argued. He suggested they should guise themselves as the inmates of an *ashram*. He had other reasons,

too, he told them.

The hermit then narrated how King Veerendranath of Mahimapur had to take over on the death of his father in a hunting accident. He was crowned when he was quite young. Soon his mother, the widowed queen, passed away, leaving in his care his little brother Jeetendranath

and sister Aishwarya.

Mahendranath sat up when he heard the name, because that was his mother's name as well. The hermit told them that Veerendranath did not marry so that he could devote all attention to his brother and sister. She was subsequently married to Prince Surendranath of a neighbouring kingdom. The prince remained in Mahimapur to keep company with the growing Jeetendranath. It was when Veerendranath was away on a pilgrimage that Mahimapur was attacked by another neighbour, Patalpur. In the fight, Surendranath lost his life, and his widow, her infant son, and brother Jeetendranath escaped to avoid being hounded out. Veerendranath, on his return, was imprisoned and he died a captive pining for his sister and brother.

The two, after wandering from place to place, settled down in Veergiri. Jeetendranath married, so that there would be someone to help Aishwarya, but that lady died during an epidemic and, unable to bear her loss, Jeetendranath one day disappeared from Veergiri. The hermit con-



cluded the story and said Aishwarya's son was the rightful heir to the throne of Mahimapur.

Vidyavati reminded the hermit that he still had not mentioned the prince's name. She then saw Mahendranath get up and embrace the hermit. "So, you're my long lost uncle, Jeetendranath! We didn't have any news of you after you disappeared!"

"Mahendranath! That was very clever of you, my son," said the hermit, holding him in a tight embrace. "I've to atone for my sin, for having deserted my sister and her son that night, leaving



them to fend for themselves. I must meet her and seek her forgiveness. That's another reason why I should go with you to Veergiri."

As all three of them set out from the hut dressed like hermits, Vidyavati remarked, "I'm only wondering who would have travelled in that palanquin. Would someone impersonate me?"

* * *

It was now almost sixty days since Princess Vidyavati was shifted to the island resort, to tide over her bad period. And nearly a fortnight had also passed after her mysterious disappearance from the lake palace. King Veerasen remembered that Acharya Vachaspati had assured him the princess would definitely return before or by the end of the bad period. In their anxiety, the king and queen sent for Acharya Vachaspati once again.

When he arrived at the palace, the Commander-in-Chief was already there. Ugrasen asked him, "Jyotishiji, has Acharya Jagatpati contacted you again?"

Veerasen did not wait till the Raj Jyotishi answered the question. "Acharyaji, have you heard anything more about the meeting

of Jyotishis with Jagatpati?"

"No, your majesty," said Vachaspati. "But I've asked my disciple Manmohan to meet some of the Jyotishis on their return; he'll try to get some details. Anyway, according to my reading of the horoscope, the planets which were in conjunction two months ago have all dispersed and moved back to their respective houses. Sun is in its ascendancy and that indicates a brighter light, or disappearance of all darkness. That should bring us information and a revelation of all mysteries. I won't be at all surprised, your majesty, if Princess Vidyavati is brought back to us. I don't want to say, she's returning by herself, because Sun is enjoying the benevolent aspect of two planets. She should be with us any day now!"

"May your words come true, Acharyaji!" remarked Queen Vajreshwari. "I'm dying to see my darling daughter."

"Ugrasen, let all the streets to the palace be guarded well," said King Veerasen, "and in case anyone were to see Vidyavati coming alone, she should be properly escorted and informa-



tion given to us as quick as possible."

"That'll be arranged forthwith, your majesty," assured the Commander-in-Chief. As he was leaving, he saw a messenger entering the hall. "A palanquin has just arrived at the palace gates, sir. There are three men on horseback, and one of them seeks an audience."

"Who's he? Did he mention any name?" queried Ugrasen.

"No, sir," replied the messenger. "He looks like someone belonging to royalty."

"And who's in the palanquin?" Ugrasen asked, impatiently.

"I don't know, sir. The curtains are down," the man answered in a hurry.

Ugrasen walked back to the king and queen and told them about the visitors. "Could it be Vidyavati?" asked an eager Queen Vajreshwari. "Come, my lord, let's go and see who they are!"

"If it's our daughter, why should she remain at the gates and not come inside?" remarked King Veerasen. "After all, the palace is not unfamiliar to her!"

By then all of them had got up



from their seats and were walking towards the courtyard, led by Ugrasen. The sight that greeted them was, the palanquin had been lowered to the ground; two men were still on horseback, one of them holding the reins of the third horse, whose rider was already walking towards the courtyard.

As soon as he saw the king and queen, he bowed to them and advanced towards the king with an outstretched hand. King Veerasen took the man's hands in his. He was quite tall and well-built and looked every inch of royal





lineage. "Prince...?" Veerasen did not complete the sentence.

"From Himagiri. I'm King Trilokpati's grand nephew," the man introduced himself, avoiding any mention of his own name.

"But the king of Himagiri is Umapati, if I'm not mistaken," said King Veerasen.

"Yes, he usurped the throne from his cousin, Trilokpati. I'm his brother Kailaspati's grandson," the man explained without any hesitation. "Kailaspati, my father Gajapati, and myself had to flee the kingdom after Umapati forcibly ascended the throne.

I'm Jagatpati."

When they heard the name, King Veerasen and Acharya Vachaspati looked at each other. And neither of them noticed Ugrasen's right hand moving in a swift action to grip the hilt of his sword. That was because he had only heard the name and had had no chance of meeting 'Acharya' Jagatpati who used to visit the palace along with the Raj Jyotishi.

"I've a piece of good news for you, your majesty," said Jagatpati with a flourish of his hand pointing to the palanquin. "I happened to rescue your daughter and I've brought her back to you."

"My darling daughter?" exclaimed Queen Vajreshwari. She was about to rush forward when King Veerasen held her back.

"If it's our Vidyavati, why doesn't she come out?" asked Veerasen, doubtingly. "She's not a stranger here. Tell me, is she unwell? Injured?"

"I shall go and bring her myself," said Jagatpati. "I assure you she's neither unwell nor injured," he added as he turned and walked



towards the gate. There he went up to the palanquin, opened the curtain, and said, "Princess! Please join your parents."

Inside the palanquin, Malini wondered why she was being addressed as princess! "But... but... I'm not... I'm only...."

"Princess, please come out! Your parents are eagerly waiting for you!" This time, Jagatpati was somewhat curt. He began walking back to the palace courtyard. Malini came out and followed him. From a distance, Veerasen and Vajreshwari thought that she was their daughter. But her hesitation to come out of the palanquin, her protestation to Jagatpati, and her bewilderment as if she was in a strange place made them doubt whether she was the princess at all, whether the man calling himself Jagatpati had made a mistake, or whether he was trying to fool them.

Ugrasen took a step forward and caught hold of Jagatpati's hand. "But, she is *not* Princess Vidyavati. You seem to have made a mistake!" he spoke authoritatively.

"She *is* Princess Vidyavati!" asserted Jagatpati.

"How do you know? Have you ever seen the princess?" questioned Ugrasen.

Jagatpati avoided a direct answer. "I rescued her and took her to my palace. I kept her there till she crossed her bad period."

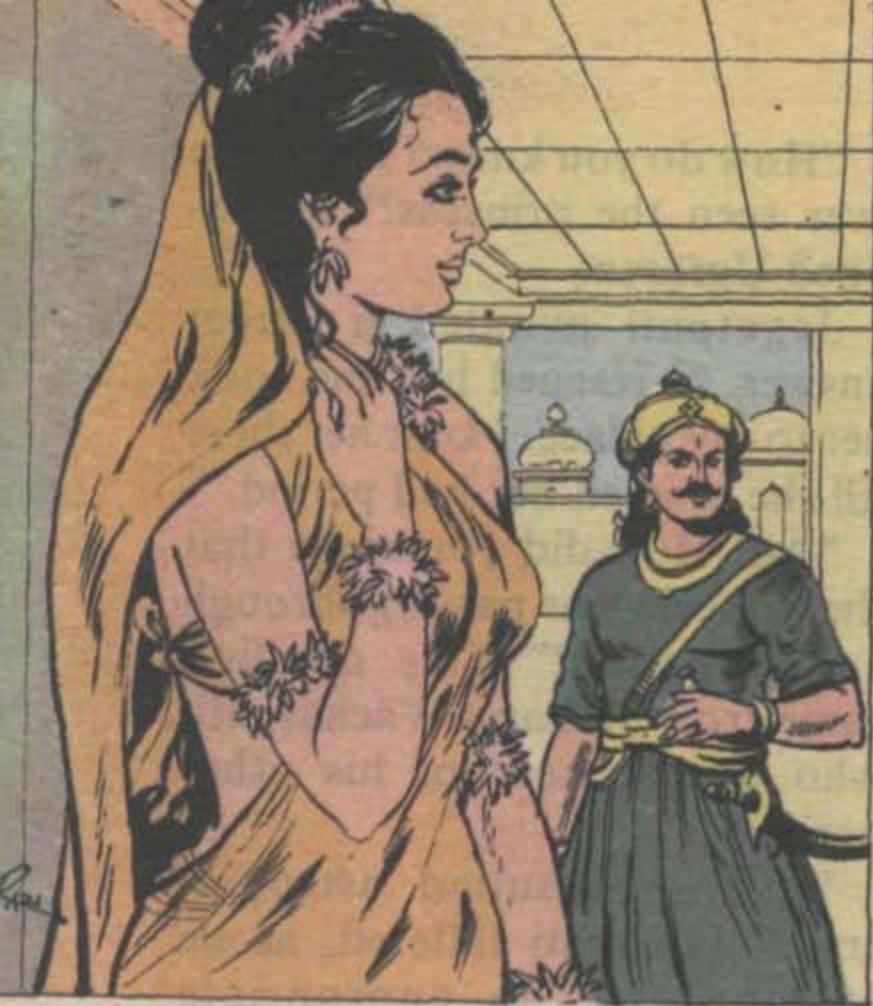
"Ah! How did *you* know that the princess was passing through a bad period?" This question came from Acharya Vachaspati, who caught hold of his other hand.

"I...I... consulted astrologers..." Jagatpati faltered, as he searched for an appropriate answer.

"So that accounts for your mysterious disappearance all these days, *Acharya Jagatpati!*" said the Raj Jyotishi, mockingly. "I'm ashamed of you, Jagatpati!" In disgust, he let his hand go.

At that very moment, Jagatpati raised his hand to clutch at the talisman he wore around his neck. Suddenly there was a flash, followed by a pall of thick smoke over the entire courtyard. He had managed to free his other hand as well, as Ugrasen stepped backward to avoid the smoke and to guard the king and queen. Jagatpati rushed towards the gates presumably to mount his horse





and get away. But he was stopped just before he reached the gates.

In the confusion created in the courtyard, nobody had noticed the arrival of three persons. They were none other than Mahendranath, his uncle, and Vidyavati. As they were looking like hermits, they were neither stopped at the gates, nor immediately recognised by anyone in the courtyard.

Mahendranath thought it strange that someone should be clutching at his necklace as he took to his heels. When the man came near him, Mahendranath recognised him as the master of

the magic palace, in spite of the fact that the beard was missing and he sported a regal turban. With his left hand, on which he had the ring, he caught hold of the man's hand and the necklace together and with his right hand he knocked off his turban. He then gave a pull at the chain and it snapped and came into his hands, with the talisman on it. "That'll be the end of all your magic, sir!" he snapped at the man.

A shout rose from the Raj Jyotishi. "Catch him! He's the villain!"

The Commander-in-Chief once again moved forward, signalling to the guardsmen on duty, who now surrounded the man. It was then that Ugrasen took a good look at the young man standing near Jagatpati. "Mahendranath! You've come back? Did you find the princess?"

"I'm Vidyavati, Uncle!"

Ugrasen could not believe his ears when he heard the familiar voice. He turned round to face the hermit girl. "Don't tell me you're the princess?" he exclaimed. He was all smiles as he led the girl to where the king



and queen were standing. "Vidyavati has come back, your majesty!"

"My darling daughter!" That came from Queen Vajreshwari, as she took the girl in an affectionate embrace.

"Vidyavati!" King Veerasen greeted her, affectionately stroking her head. "But why this dress?"

Before she could reply him, someone came and caught hold of her hand. "Princess Vidyavati!"

"Aren't you Malini?" queried Vidyavati. "So, it was you who travelled in the palanquin?"

Till then, everybody seemed to have missed one other person, who was standing slightly away from all of them, watching all the goings-on with interest. He had a benign smile on his face.

Mahendranath went up to King Veerasen and bowed to him. "Your majesty! I've succeeded in my mission. I'm happy I could find Princess Vidyavati and bring her back to you. We both had the protection and blessings of my uncle, here!"

The hermit then approached the king with folded hands. "My



uncle is a hermit now. In his earlier life, he was Jeetendranath of Mahimapur," said Mahendranath

"I had met King Veerendranath once, when he came here to visit the Devi temple," said King Veerasen. "That was a long time ago. Subsequently, I also heard that he died in captivity. And you are...?"

"I'm his younger brother," replied the hermit. "Mahendranath's father was killed in battle with the King of Patalpur when he attacked us. My widowed sister, her little son, and I ran



away from the kingdom. Later, I renounced the world and became a hermit. It was only when Mahendranath came to me in the course of his search for the princess that I was meeting my nephew after a long lapse of time. I now wish to meet his mother—my sister Aishwarya—just for once, before I go back to the life I've chosen for myself."

"We'll send for her, sir," said Ugrasen.

"If you'll permit me, sir," pleaded Mahendranath, "let me break the good news to her and bring her here myself."

"Ugrasen," said the king, "see that he is sent with proper escort. Henceforth, Mahendranath and his mother will be our guests."

"My lord!" Queen Vajreshwari went up to the king and whispered into his ears. "Won't our Vidyavati and Mahendranath

make an ideal pair?" She was loud enough for everybody to hear.

"All in good time, my queen!" responded King Veerasen who turned to look at Mahendranath. He found the young man blushing. Then, turning to the hermit, he said, "Jeetendranath, please stay with us in the palace till Mahendranath and his mother join us." The king led a beaming Vajreshwari and a coy Vidyavati on either side to the palace, followed by the hermit and Acharya Vachaspathi. Malini walked behind the princess.

By then the guards had taken away Jagatpati. Ugrasen put his hand on Mahendranath's shoulders and said, "Come, I shall myself take you to your mother. Today, she'll be the happiest person on earth."

(Concluded)





New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

A word not kept

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O king, you seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying a comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. You seem to be quite adamant. Such arrogance may not help you keep your promise if you had given



one to anybody. You'll realise the futility of the whole thing if only you listen to my story." The vampire then narrated this story.

The ruler of Jayanagar, Jayasimha, was extremely strong and courageous. But he would not do anything unjust. His subjects were happy and contented. They had no problems. His queen, Chandravati, gave birth to a daughter. Being an only child, Indumati enjoyed a lot of freedom and was brought up like a boy. She grew up, clever not only in studies but in the use of the

bow and arrow and sword. She learnt the art of self-defence. When she reached marriageable age, her parents began searching for a suitable husband for her.

Indumati had some definite ideas and views. "My husband should be one who is an adept in fighting. Suppose our kingdom is driven to facing an enemy in the future, he should be able to meet them and defeat them in war. I shall only marry such a prince who is able to overpower me in fight. You may make an announcement about this condition," she told her parents.

The announcement was made in Jayanagar as well as in the neighbouring kingdoms. Many suitors came forward to accept her challenge. Of course, they knew that being the only heir to the Jayanagar throne, they would have complete sway over the kingdom once they married her. Besides, she was only a girl, and it should not be difficult to win a fight with her.

Indumati was surprised that so many came forward to accept her challenge, wishing to take a chance and try their luck. Secretly, she was hoping that at

least one of them would overpower her to claim her hand. However, it was only when they really met her face to face that these princes realised it was not that easy to defeat her. Everyone of them was routed by Indumati, and they had to go back disappointed.

She was taking on the suitors one after another. Among them was Madanasen, the prince of Maratakapur. He watched the fight every day, by joining the crowd incognito. He carefully watched how Princess Indumati fought and the different strategies she adopted to meet the method of fighting followed by each prince. One day, he could not control himself when he saw a particular way she used the sword. "Bravo!" he shouted in appreciation and encouragement. Indumati turned to look at him, wondering who he might be who could understand the intricacies of each and every stance and step during the fight.

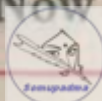
When he thought he had learnt all her strategies, Madanasen presented himself to fight with her. The two fought cleverly and fiercely. Neither of them was

prepared to surrender to the other. Indumati knew that he was of a different mettle and that she would not be able to subdue him so easily. She tried every trick in her repertoire, but Madanasen was able to meet every one of them. Before Indumati knew what was happening, he had succeeded in knocking her sword off her hand. She stopped the fight and joined her parents. Cheers rose from the multitude watching the proceedings. The king and queen eagerly awaited the prince to come forward to present himself to them.

It was then that Indumati recognised him as the one who had cheered her in encouragement. "Weren't you among the crowd that day cheering in appreciation? You shouted to compliment me on a particular stance I took. Am I right?"

"Yes, I was among the audience," Madanasen confessed. "And I did shout in appreciation."

Now Indumati knew how he had succeeded in overpowering her. "My condition was that I would marry anyone who would defeat me in the contest. Now





I've to go back on that condition. Though you've defeated me, I can't marry you. You can yourself find out the reason."

Madanasen thought for a while. "Yes, what you say is right, O Princess. I should not marry you." He then bowed to her and left the place.

The king and queen were surprised over their daughter's decision. They had agreed to hold these contests only at her instance. She insisted that she would marry only whoever defeated her. Madanasen achieved that, but she was not

ready to marry him. And he, too, had meekly accepted her decision, saying he could not possibly claim her hand. How strange! They were unable to guess what really was the cause.

The vampire concluded the story and asked King Vikramaditya: "O king! I've some doubts. Indumati was proud that she was an expert in warfare. That's why she announced that she would marry only whoever defeated her, didn't she? As she scored a victory over one prince after another, she was becoming more and more arrogant. Then came Madanasen who succeeded in overpowering her. Again it was her arrogance that prevented her from keeping her word. Why did she say he did not deserve her hand in marriage in spite of his victory over her? It was all because of her arrogance, wasn't it? If you know the answers to my questions and still refuse to reveal them, you may well be forewarned: your head will be blown to pieces!"

King Vikramaditya did not take much time to answer the vampire. "I don't think Indumati was arrogant. Though she had



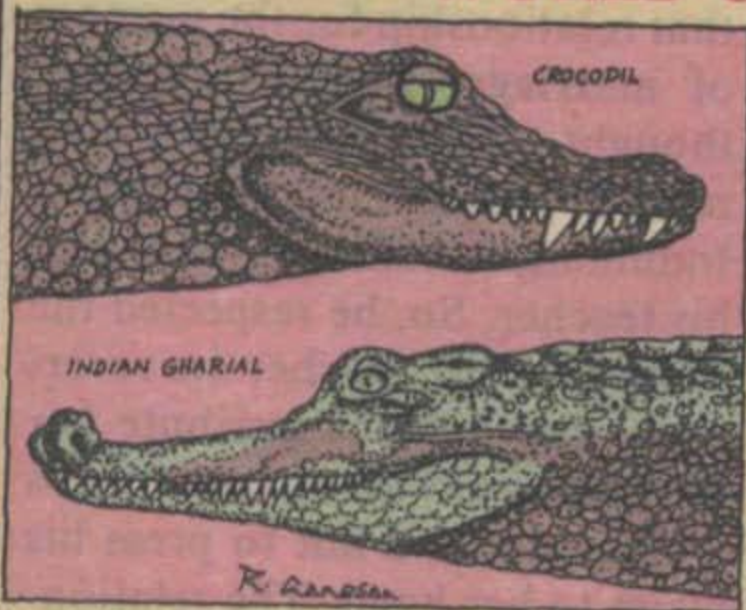
stipulated that condition, when Madanasen defeated her in sword-fight, she didn't keep her word. True. If we were to think deep, we would find out what had prompted her to take such a stand. She certainly was one who would keep her word. Unlike other princes, Madanasen did not go for a fight with her straight away. He mingled himself among the crowd to watch her fighting, and to study the strategies she adopted while fighting. He learnt all that, just as a disciple would learn from his teacher. And a teacher cannot marry his or her student. It's universally accepted that one's father, mother, and teacher are all like a god. Indumati realised that Madanasen was first her student and then only a suitor. She was not willing to accept

that relationship for the purpose of marriage. Madanasen, too, thought on the same lines and realised that he could not marry Indumati, because she was like his teacher. So, he respected the wishes of his teacher in reverence, and did not attribute her attitude to any arrogance. That's why he decided not to press his claim to her hand. The relationship between a teacher and his student is more sacred than that between others. That's why Indumati went back on the condition she herself had stipulated. That's the truth."

The vampire knew that the king had outwitted him once again. He flew back to the ancient tree carrying the corpse along with him. Vikramaditya drew his sword and went after the vampire.



Dinosaur's cousins



Crocodiles are the closest relatives of the dinosaur. They are generally found in lakes, rivers, and swamps. They belong to two families. Crocodiles, alligators and caymans are from *Crocodylidae*. The Indian gharial belongs to *Gavialidae*. In their habits, they are similar, but there are differences in their external features. Crocodiles have enlarged fourth teeth in their lower jaws which are visible. The gharial has a long slender snout and the teeth are not that visible. While the

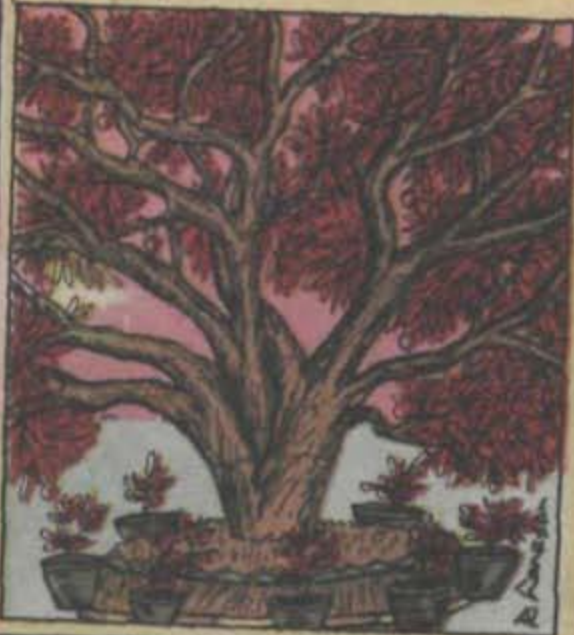
body lies submerged, the raised nostrils help them to breathe.

Roaring tigers—less fearsome

If at all you were to come upon a tiger lying across your way, you may be terror-struck, but that does not mean that you should run away! Take a good look at the animal (that is, if there is any courage left in you), and if you find its ears raised forward revealing the white patches inside, you can conclude that it has taken an aggressive posture. You may then think of making your presence scarce. However, if the ears are still in a flat position, you may deduce that it has assumed a defensive posture. The animal may then roar and exhibit its teeth. Nothing to be afraid of. You can take an extra second to take cover. Remember, barking dogs never bite, and roaring tigers seldom pounce.



One of the oldest



A piece of land was acquired in 1912 to start an agricultural college in Coimbatore. A mango tree there was *then* estimated to be 50 years old. The tree has not only continued to live, but been yielding fruit. It gives, on an average, some 2,000 mangoes every year—each weighing nearly 250 gms. The normal life span of a mango tree is about 50 years. This unusual tree in Coimbatore should be now 140 years old—one of the oldest surviving mango trees in India. Of "Nedunchaalai" variety, its trunk has a circumference of 14ft, and has branches even 40 ft long. They have been given adequate support to prevent them from breaking under their weight.

CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-53

BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF INDIA

This stork is painted !



One of the most striking and rather common members of the stork family (Ciconidae) in India is the Painted Stork (*Ibis leucocephalus*). As the name indicates, this tall (1 metre) bird has a variety of colours on it. It has a waxy yellow face devoid of feathers; its long bill is yellow; there is a pattern of speckled black on its wings; its tail feathers are a rose-pink; the plumage is white on top, barred with a glossy greenish black, and it has a black band across the breast. The bird is as big as a vulture.

These birds are found in groups or large gatherings at jheels and marshes. Like other storks, they can also be seen standing hunched up and motionless. Sometimes they saunter about sedately on marshland or in shallow water in search of food, which consists mainly of fish, frogs, crabs, and snails. They perch freely and roost in trees in or near water. They fly in a series of powerful wing strokes, which are followed by a short glide.

The nest is a large stick platform. The shallow central depression will be lined up with straw and leaves of water weeds. A tree may have upto 20 such nests.

The painted storks do not have a voice-box. So, they are mostly silent. The only sounds they make are grunts and clattering of mandibles.



INDIA THROUGH HER LITERATURE

India is a great country which has nurtured so many languages and so many cultures through the ages. Each major language of India has a rich literature. We know more or less about the great books of the past. But we know little about the outstanding books of our own times. In these pages, **Chandamama** will tell you the stories of the novels of our age, written in different Indian languages. The narration will be very brief, but we hope, this will inspire our readers to read the full book in original or in translation in the future.

—Editor

SAGA OF A BRAVE BOY

“Just as darkness engulfs you when the lamp with which you find your path at night is extinguished”, the hero of our story sees darkness all around him when his mother dies.

The hero is Bhau, a boy of Pune whose father, Raoji, is wandering in Bombay and elsewhere in search of luck. The gentleman believes that he will become a millionaire as soon as the evil spell cast on his life by some distant planets is over. That of course never happens.

Bhau's sister Gangi, only one-and-half-years older than the boy, is married to a middle-aged man who had lost two wives earlier. She is tortured like a slave and one day escapes from her cruel husband's house.

Bhau and Gangi luckily find a benefactor in Shivram. He is a man with progressive ideas. His wife shares his views. What is an equally happy coincidence, their only child, Sundari, is highly sensitive and idealistic too.

Shivram helps Bhau and Gangi to be educated. But the society of the time did not take kindly to women going to schools. It hated a woman who deserted her husband even if the husband was a brute. No wonder Bhau, Gangi and Shivram's family face much difficulty. But they are confident that what they are doing is right. They are an excellent unit.

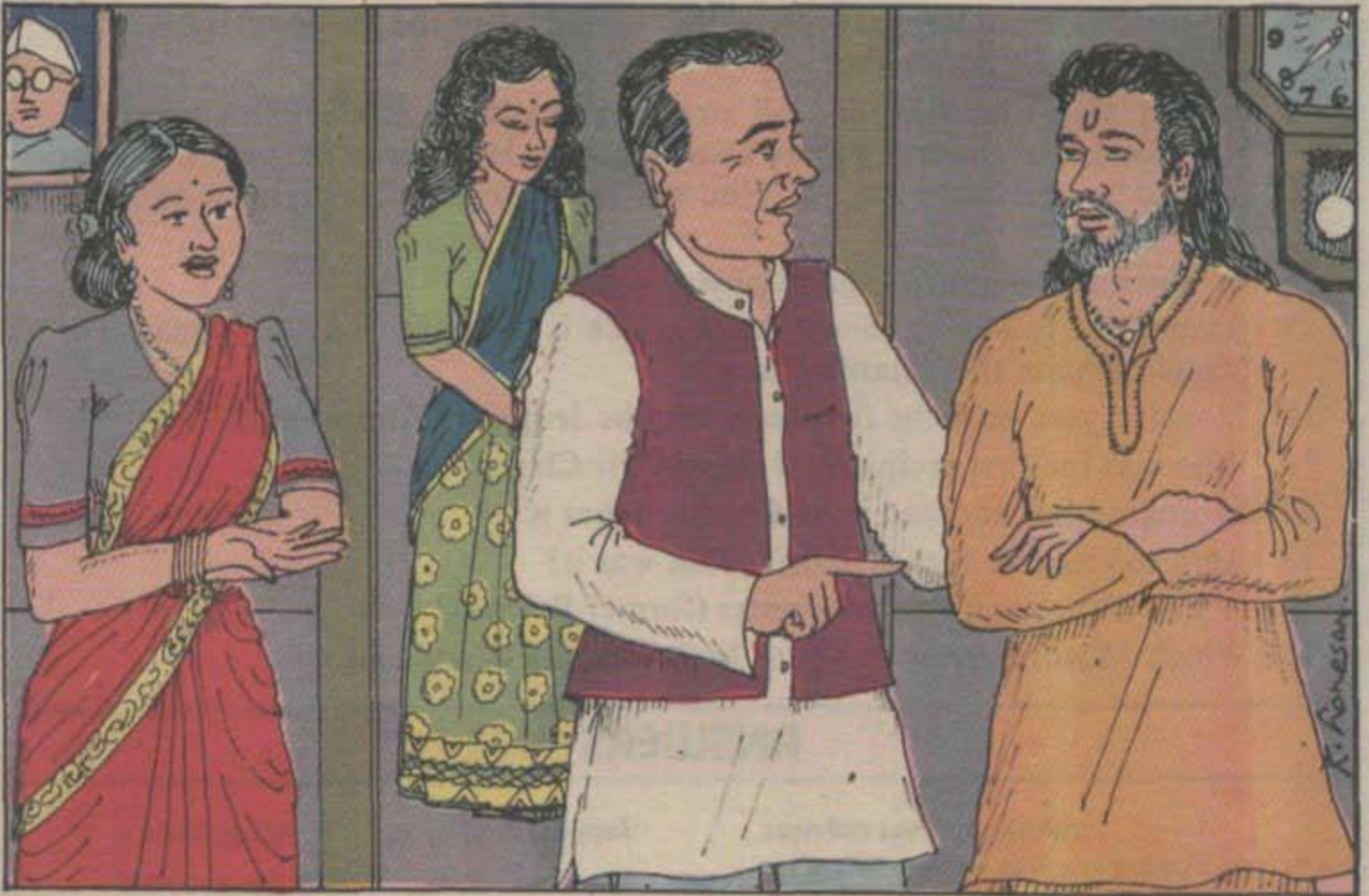
Bhau qualifies as a lawyer. But he devotes much of his time to lecturing on social problems and editing a journal dedicated to social reforms. In this he wins a few friends, but the number of his enemies only increases.



He feels depressed. Should he give up his mission and confine himself to the little world of serving his own self?

But at an emotionally charged moment in his life he resolves to work for his lofty goal with a total dedication. He takes an oath never to marry.

The very next day Shivram offers his lovely daughter's hand to him. It is a trying moment for Bhau. He respects Shivram more than anybody else in the world. He loves Sundari from his childhood. But the proposal comes a bit too late. He has already taken his sacred vow. Shivram, Sundari and Gangi are not the kind of people to impose their will on the hero.



Our hero now takes a new name, Bhavananda, and founds a hermitage. With a few followers, he carries on with his mission of social reforms. But he cannot stand the rigours of his new routine. His health deteriorates. He dies.

But his followers promise to continue his work.

Mee (Myself) by Harinarayan Apte is a pioneering Marathi novel published in 1916. It set a new trend in literary style, narrating the story in an autobiographical vein and drawing the picture of yesterday's Indian society with a masterly touch of realism. It continues to be a great influence on modern Marathi fiction.

DO YOU KNOW?

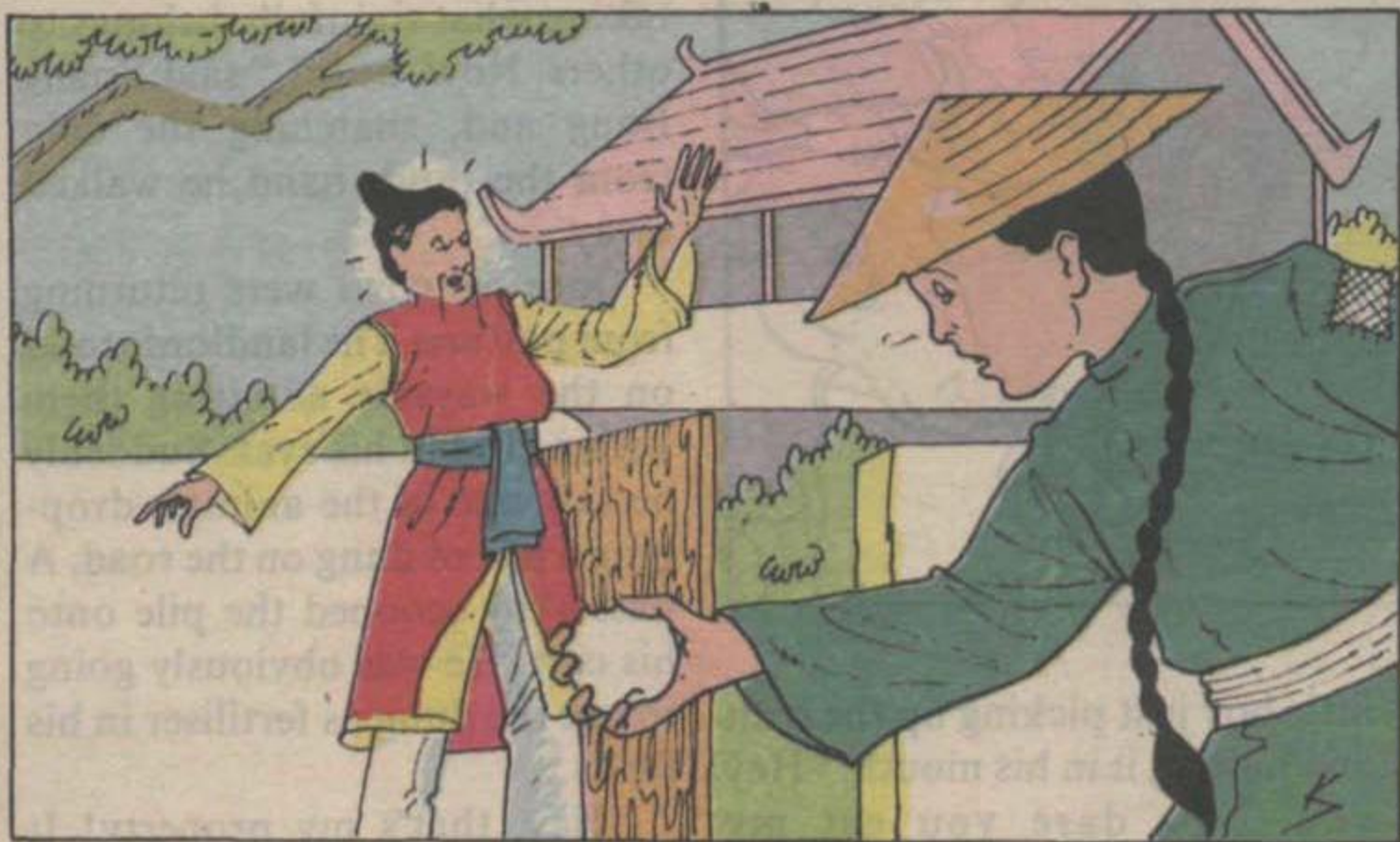
1. Which famous Indian cloth is said to have been used in ancient Egypt for wrapping mummies?
2. In the west, who is regarded as the Father of Medicine?
3. In the Ellora complex, there is an important Hindu temple which took a hundred years to build. What is it called?
4. Where was Prophet Mohammed born?
5. Who started the Paunar Ashram?
6. A Muslim king of Bengal ordered the translation of the MAHABHARATA into Bengali. Who was he?
7. A film star who travelled all over the world as UNESCO's goodwill ambassador to children passed away recently. Her role in her very first film fetched her the Oscar Award. Who was the actress, and what is the name of the film?
8. In which two countries did puppets originate?
9. Among the following monuments, which is the oldest—Qutb Minar, Taj Mahal, Khajuraho, Ajanta Caves?
10. In which year were the first atom bombs dropped? And where?
11. Who was the first recipient of Param Vir Chakra?
12. Leningrad has adopted its old name. What is it?
13. Agra too had an earlier name. What was it?
14. Which is the capital of Myanmar (former Burma)?
15. Which Muslim shrine in South India attracts Hindus also?

ANSWERS

1. Mulmul Khas, which was the best among woven cloth, widely referred to in old Greek treatises.
2. Hippocrates.
3. The Kailas temple. The construction was started by the Rashtrakuta ruler, Krishna I (757-783). It is a mammoth sculpture of earth and rock.
4. Mecca
5. Vinoba Bhave
6. Nusrat Shah, who is remembered as a patron of the arts.
7. Audrey Hepburn—The Roman Holiday.
8. India and Egypt
9. The Ajanta caves.
10. 1945—Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in Japan
11. Major Somnath Sharma was awarded the PVC in 1947, posthumously.
12. St. Petersburg, called after Peter I the Great.
13. Akbarabad
14. Yangon (Rangoon)
15. The Nagore Shrine of Quadinwalli Sahib, who was friendly with the Hindu rulers of Tanjore. One of the rajas prayed to the saint for a son; when a son was born to him, he enlarged the saint's tomb.



SELLING THE SHADOW



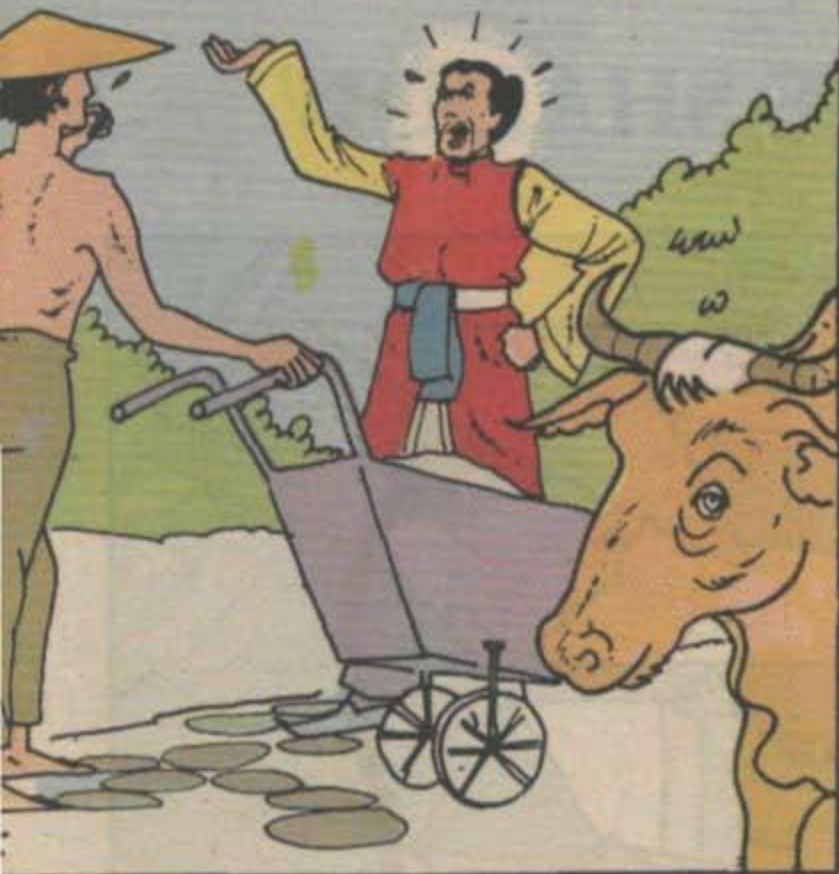
In old old days, there lived a very rich landlord called Yang Bong. He was not only the wealthiest man in the village but the stingiest, too. He owned acres of orchards, sold the produce, and always reaped a handsome profit. Thus, he gathered lots and lots of money. Yet he never stopped to crave for more. In fact seldom did he let a chance go by to squeeze the tiniest farthing

even from the poorest.

One day as he was strolling in his garden, he looked with pleasure at his apple trees, all laden with ripe golden fruit. "What a fortune they would fetch me!" he chuckled to himself and noticed a large apple dropping from the branch hanging over the garden wall.

Yang Bong bounded outside through the gate, and found a





little boy just picking up the fruit and putting it in his mouth. "Hey you, how dare you eat my apple?" he shouted grabbing the boy's hand.

"But, Sir, I only picked it up from the common pathway!" cried the little boy rather frightened.

"Didn't the apple fall from my tree? It rightfully belongs to me! You naughty urchin! You must pay for it now," said the landlord angrily.

"I've no money on me, except this tiny copper piece that my mother gave me to get some salt

from the market," said the boy with tearful eyes.

"You've to give it to me now. Yeah, you must learn to pay for taking what rightfully belongs to others. Now, be off," said Yuang Bong and, snatching the coin from the boy's hand, he walked away.

Once his cows were returning from pasture. The landlord stood on the wayside admiring them with a glint in his eyes. Suddenly he saw one of the animals dropping a pile of dung on the road. A passer-by scooped the pile onto his cart. He was obviously going to use the dung as fertiliser in his fields.

"Hey, that's my property! It came from my cow," roared the landlord rushing forward to him.

"But I picked it from the ground; I didn't steal it!" said the poor man rather surprised.

"No, no, you must pay for it. Nor would I take the dung back now," shouted the fellow threateningly.

"I do not even have a penny in my pockets. Please let me go," pleaded the farmer.

Yuang Bong did not leave him alone, but searched him tho-

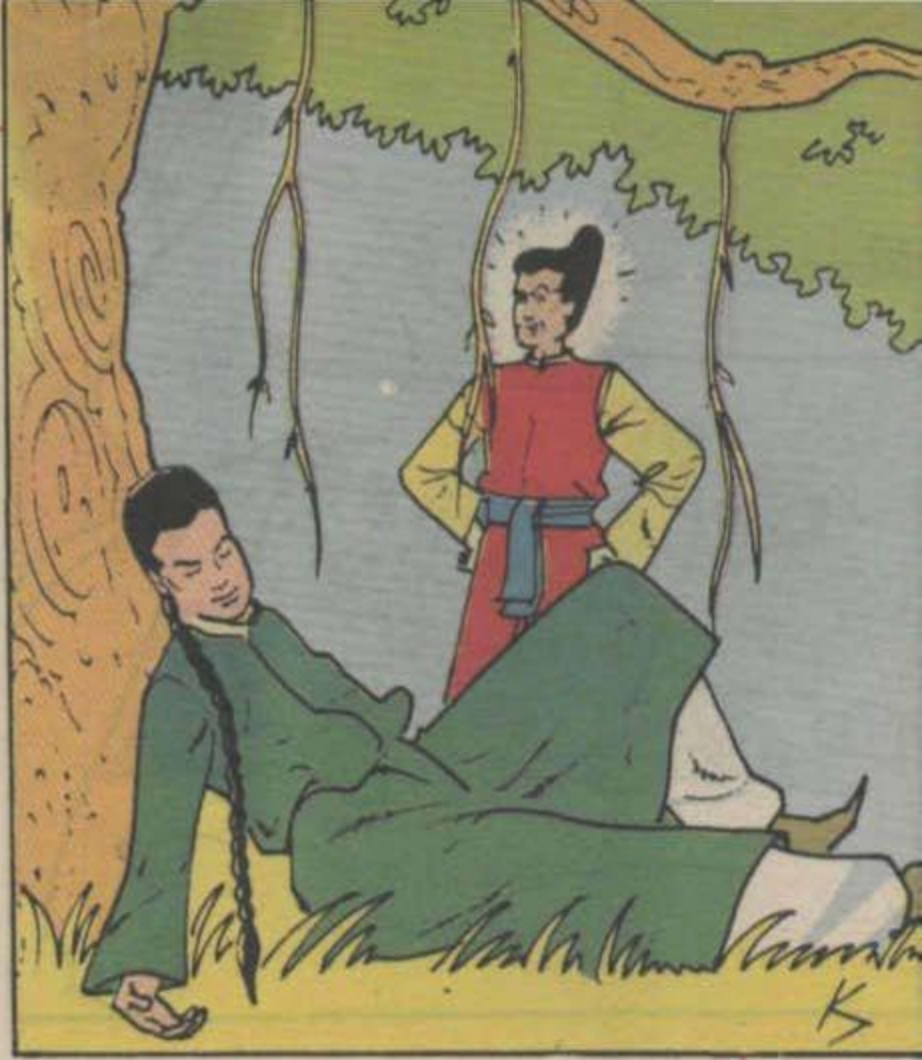


roughly. It was true, there was not a single penny on him. "All right, if not money, a sackful of corn will do instead. You see, this is the rule. You cannot just take away what rightfully belongs to others!" he explained forcefully.

It was not long before all the nearby villages knew how miserly Yang Bong was. He never gave anything away without demanding a good price for it. No matter how petty that thing was. With the passing of days, the landlord not only grew richer and richer but also greedier and greedier.

A great banyan tree stood outside his house. In fact, he had planted it himself many years ago. It had grown tall and wide. Its branches spread like a canopy over a very large area, even over the pathway running just outside his compound wall.

It was a hot summer day. A weary traveller stopped and reposed under the shade of the banyan tree. It was so cool and comfortable there that he soon fell sound asleep. When he awoke after a very pleasant nap, whom should he see but Yang Bong standing in front of him with a glaring look.



"You've been sleeping under the shade of a tree that belongs to me. So the shade, too, is mine. Therefore, you must pay for having used what is mine," argued the landlord.

"But, Friend," replied the young traveller, "the tree is outside your house and its branches are spreading beyond your compound boundary. Surely the shade of the tree is for everybody to enjoy!"

"No, no," insisted the other, "you must pay for the shade if you want to use it."

The youth thought awhile and



then asked. "All right, will you sell the shade of your tree?"

The landlord was overjoyed. He had never imagined that he could even make some money out of the shade of his tree! When he looked at the young man who seemed to come from a well-to-do family, his eyes glittered greedily. He naturally quoted a very high price. The traveller put his hand into the bag lying beside him and paid the amount.

"I've never come across such a wise man like you," said Yuang Bong as he counted the silver pieces, his chubby round face

beaming with pleasure. "The shade of my banyan tree now rightfully belongs to you. You and all your friends are welcome to rest in it. I'll not come in your way, for you've handsomely paid for it. It is the law you know, and I strictly follow it."

"Yes indeed, according to law, from this instant I'm the rightful owner of the shade of your tree," replied the traveller with a smile.

"That's right," added the other emphatically, "the shade and whatever lies in it belongs to you. These figs and those dry leaves over there in the shade are yours too!"

They signed an agreement accordingly.

The sun rose as usual over the hills and Yuang Bong was out for his early morning stroll. Suddenly his eyes met a very disturbing sight indeed. The young man, now the owner of his shade, along with his friends was relaxing in his compound. They were happily munching the apples lying beside them.

"You Rogues! What are you doing here?" shouted the landlord.



"We are only resting under the shade which now belongs to me. We are eating the apples which happen to lay in my shade. Have you so soon forgotten our agreement?" replied the traveller most casually.

It was true, at that time of the day the shadow of the banyan tree fell inside the landlord's garden and shaded some of his apple trees.

Yuang Bong only stammered some nonsense but could do nothing. According to law, at the moment the shade and the apples in it belonged to the young man.

The sun gradually moved in the blue sky and the traveller and his friends faithfully followed the shadow of the great banyan tree. They soon established themselves comfortably inside the landlord's house. They were almost a dozen now, for the young man had invited more friends. They revelled to their heart's content. Some sat on the silk cushions, some on the expensive carpet and others relished themselves in his kitchen. The young traveller lay on the soft couch and soon began to snore



loudly.

Yuang Bong's stout little figure seemed to boil in anger. But alas, what could he do? The shadow of the banyan tree, at this particular time, fell over his house and into his courtyard.

The day ripened and in the late afternoon the shadow of the tree shifted to the landlord's innermost chamber. The young man and his friends trooped into it. They were now over twenty-five, for he had invited many more. It was a bedroom, richly decorated and furnished. Soon they made

themselves feel at home. Suddenly the young man discovered a large chest in one corner of the room. The shadow of the tree had just fallen on it. He opened it and found it full of gold and silver pieces.

"Oh! Oh! This chestful of wealth now belongs to me! For it is in the shade which I own!" he exclaimed jubilantly.

"No, no, you can't take my money away for nothing. The chest is mine and the gold and silver pieces in it, too," protested the landlord in utter despair.

"Ah, you seem to have again forgotten our understanding? You must always follow the law, you know," reminded the traveller.

Alas, a sad Yuang Bong only helplessly stared at them. They

took away several of his valuable things, including the chestful of riches. Like a stone he stood while the others sang and made merry.

The young traveller had heard about the miserly nature of the landlord and how he bullied even the poorest man. So he called all those who had been exploited by him and distributed among them the wealth he and his friends had collected from Yuang Bong's house. They all went back home content and happy.

As for Yuang Bong, the greedy landlord, well, he folded up his business and left the town to live in a neighbouring country. Perhaps there he took to a new way of life and was kind and helpful to all!

—Retold by Anup Kishore Das





VEER HANUMAN

30

(Lakshmana succeeds in preventing Indrajit complete his *yaga*. A fierce fight ensues between them. Lakshmana's arrows pierce through his armour. Another arrow beheads Indrajit's charioteer. The Vanara soldiers kill the horses. Indrajit goes and comes back in another chariot. Lakshmana breaks his bow while Vibhishana kills the chariot-horses. Another arrow from Lakshmana beheads Indrajit. Ravana is crestfallen, but decides to offer a fight after performing a *yaga*.)

Information reached Vibhishana that his brother Ravana was performing a *yaga* to defeat Rama. "At no cost should he be allowed to continue the *yaga*," he warned Rama. "We would be in difficulties if he completes the exercise. Out of the *yaga* will rise horses, elephants, chariots, and even mighty warriors and sold-

ers. All that will only add to his strength. Once he achieves that, no one will be able to defeat him in battle."

Jambava, who was present there, said, "Angada is an expert in making himself invisible. He should be able to disturb the *yaga* without anyone seeing him." Everybody thought it was a wise



suggestion.

Angada agreed to make an attempt. He entered Ravana's chambers and caught hold of his queen, Mandodari, by the hair and dragged her to where Ravana was holding the *yaga*. The demon king did see his wife, but was so engrossed in the puja that he did not get up to protect her. When Angada saw that Ravana was unconcerned about Mandodari, he pulled her and pushed her in front of him. Mandodari was now upset as her husband never raised his eyes even for once. "I'm the wife of

someone who has conquered all the three worlds. Isn't there anybody to save me?" she wailed. "Even the Devas shiver at the mere mention of the name Ravana. Is he not capable of protecting his own wife?"

Ravana could not control himself anymore. He rushed to the aid of Mandodari. Angada, whom no one could see, then left his hold on Mandodari and ran away. "Don't you think enough is enough?" she castigated her husband. "Can't you send back Sita at least now?"

Ravana found himself in a dilemma. Halting the war was equal to surrendering to Rama. Anyway he left the place without completing the *yaga*.

After suspending the *yaga*, Ravana was undecided for some time. He went and lay down in the open on a mat and began contemplating. Why should he remain alive at all if he were to accept Mandodari's suggestion and stopped the war with Rama? Was he, who had conquered all three worlds, incapable of defeating a mere human being?

While such thoughts disturbed him, who else should appear



before him than Narada? "Have you forgotten all those who are only too willing to help you, Ravana?" the sage chided him. "Why should you have any worry when you have such friends? For example, how about Mahiravana, who is like your twin-brother?"

Suddenly, Ravana woke up from his lethargy. He got up smiling. He expressed his gratitude to Narada for reminding him of his friends. After seeing him off, Ravana sent for Mahiravana.

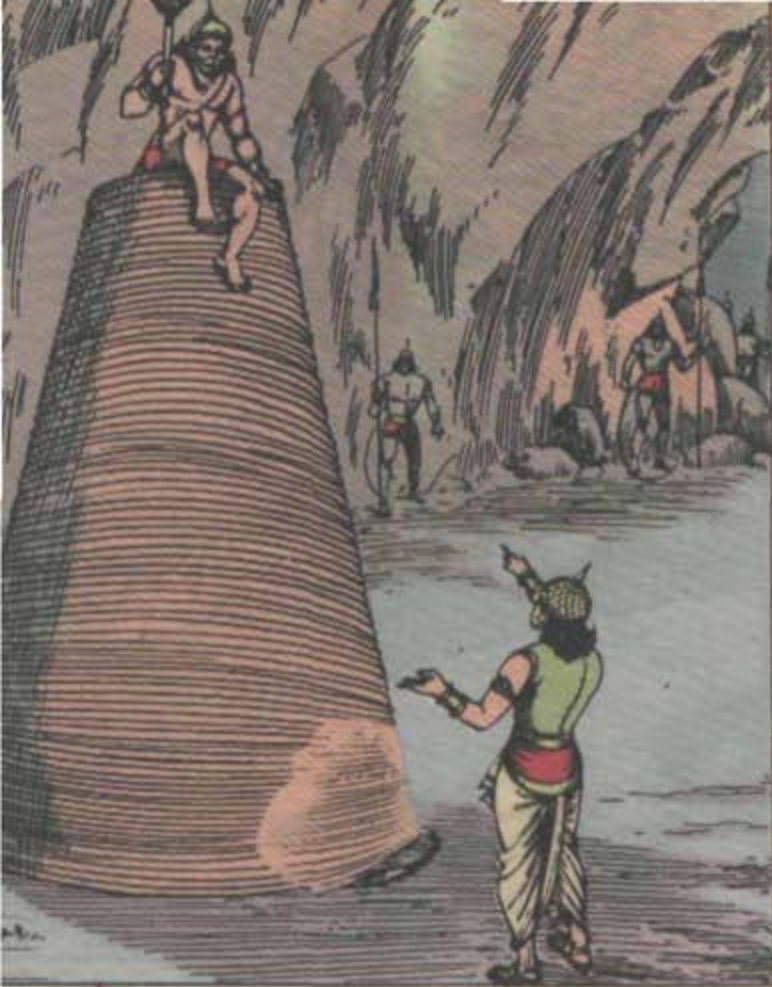
Right then, there were happenings in Patala, the nether world, ruled by King Mahiravana. He had acquired various powers and was an adept in several *mantras*. Magic and tricks were just child's play for him. Once Mahiravana kidnapped Vasuki's daughter, Chandrasena, from the Kingdom of Snakes and kept her captive. A beauty, Chandrasena nourished a desire to marry Rama. She disclosed this to Mahiravana, while rejecting his own offer of marriage. In fact, she even worshipped a stone idol of Rama.

Mahiravana again and again pleaded with Chandrasena to marry him. She pointed to him the idol and said, "He'll decide

your fate! Your dream of making me your wife will never materialise!"

Mahiravana laughed aloud. "Why Rama? Nobody on earth will be able to touch my body, let alone kill me. Remember that! You don't know me well, Chandrasena. Yonder there, in a cave, live five giant beetles. They are the guardians of my life. Only if they are killed at one and the same time can anyone bring about my end. No one is capable of entering that cave, which is well-guarded by demons. Not many know of these secrets. I've





revealed all these to you only because you're bent upon praising Rama, while I'm determined to make you my wife. Do you still want to believe that Rama will be able to kill me?" He grabbed the idol and smashed it on the floor.

As he went out of the room, Mahiravana got the message that Ravana was looking for him. He opened up the earth and presented himself before Ravana, who received him with reverence and respect and explained to him all that had happened, telling him that they now had a common enemy.

"Please don't worry," said Mahiravana. "I shall go and capture both Rama and Lakshmana, take them to Patala, and imprison them there."

Vibhishana somehow got news of this meeting between Ravana and Mahiravana. He warned the Vanara soldiers that Rama and Lakshmana might be kidnapped and asked them to guard the brothers. Hanuman rushed to where Rama and Lakshmana were sleeping and barred the entrance by elongating his tail, and then sat alert on top of the tail. He was sure nobody would be able to gain entry without his consent.

A little later, he saw Vibhishana coming there to meet Rama and Lakshmana. He complimented Hanuman for creating a veritable fortress to guard Rama and Lakshmana. "Let me alert them also about Mahiravana." Hanuman allowed him to enter.

As Vibhishana came out, he warned Hanuman once again. "Be alert, Hanuman! Mahiravana may even impersonate me to kidnap Rama and Lakshmana. There's no trick that he doesn't



know." He then went away.

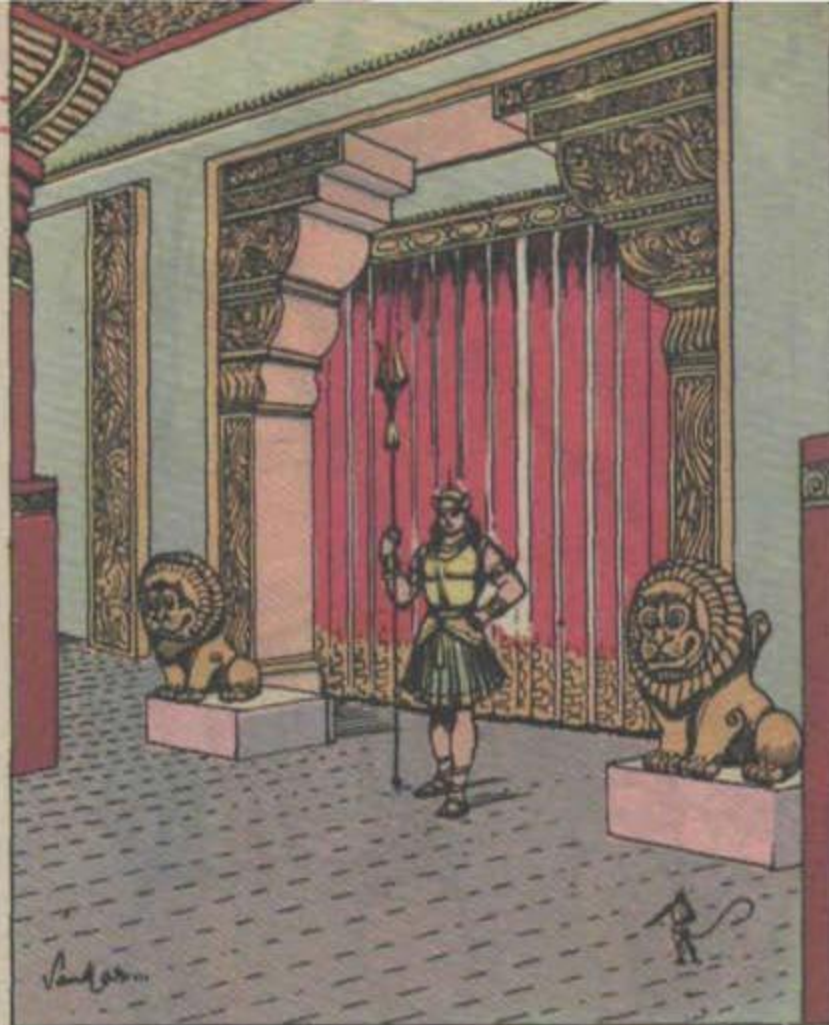
A while later, who else should Hanuman see than Vibhishana? Hanuman took him to be Mahiravana in the guise of Vibhishana. He caught hold of him. "Don't think you can play your tricks on me, you Mahiravana! I shall put an end to you even now!"

"What's this, Hanuman? I'm Vibhishana!" he said. "I'm afraid Mahiravana has already cheated you. Better go and find out whether Rama and Lakshmana are not in."

Hanuman went inside and stood aghast! Both Rama and Lakshmana were missing. He cried aloud. "I've been cheated... cheated by that Mahiravana!"

Jambava heard his cries and rushed there. "Don't waste time any more. You must immediately go and find them!" Hanuman took instructions from Vibhishana how to reach Patala. He enlarged his figure and flew into the skies.

Mahiravana, who took the guise of Vibhishana, had managed to reduce Rama and Lakshmana to the size of dolls by his magic and take them out, hiding them in the folds of his dress.



Hanuman had failed to notice this. Mahiravana went straight to Chandrasena and kept the dolls in front of her. "There! He's your Rama! And that's Lakshmana! You were worshipping Rama and had faith in his strength. You were also certain that he'll kill me. What has happened to all that? They're now in my custody, and tomorrow they'll be offered to mother Kali. After that, I'll come back to you. Be ready to marry me!" He sneered at her, tied Rama and Lakshmana together, and took them away.

Meanwhile, Hanuman was



going along the western skies when he saw a mountain like a lotus bud. He landed on top of the mountain and peeped through a hole there. After reducing his size, he entered Patala. He had reached the main entrance, where stood a young guard. The moment he saw the youth, he had an inexplicable affection for him. The guard stopped him from moving further. "Who're you? How dare you come to Patala?" He then gave Hanuman a hard blow.

Hanuman was surprised at the youth's strength. "I don't think I

know you, but you seem to be as strong as I am!"

"So, you claim to possess as much strength as I have?" the youth said, mockingly. "Do you know who I am? I'm Matsya Vallabha! And I'm the son of mighty Hanuman! Do I've to tell you more?"

Hanuman was stupefied. He stood still, not wanting to believe all that he heard. He had never seen the youngster, yet he was claiming to be his son; and he had till then remained unmarried! Was the youth taking cover under his name? He should not be allowed to carry on like that. Hanuman looked at him intently and said, "Don't be too clever! Hanuman is a bachelor and the whole world knows that. So, don't quote his name!" He then gave him a strong slap on the face. As the youth was nursing the pain, a voice arose from behind him. "Don't doubt his words. What he said is true. He's your son, and don't kill him!"

Hanuman turned to where he heard the voice and saw a beautiful maiden approaching him. She came and stood beside the youth. As he looked at her unbeliev-





Sankar...



ingly, she moved up to him and prostrated before him. "I'm Swarchala. My father is the king of the southern sea. I'm queen to the thousands of sea creatures. You may not know me, but you're only too familiar to me."

"What do you mean? I'm afraid I've never seen you," protested Hanuman.

"Do you remember, you were once crossing the sea to go to Lanka?" explained the woman. "Simhika had then pulled at your shadow, and you fought with her. During the fight, drops of your perspiration fell on the sea and I swallowed some of them as I was then in the form of a fish. Later I gave birth of this youngster. My son Matsya Vallabha is now fortunate to have met his father!"

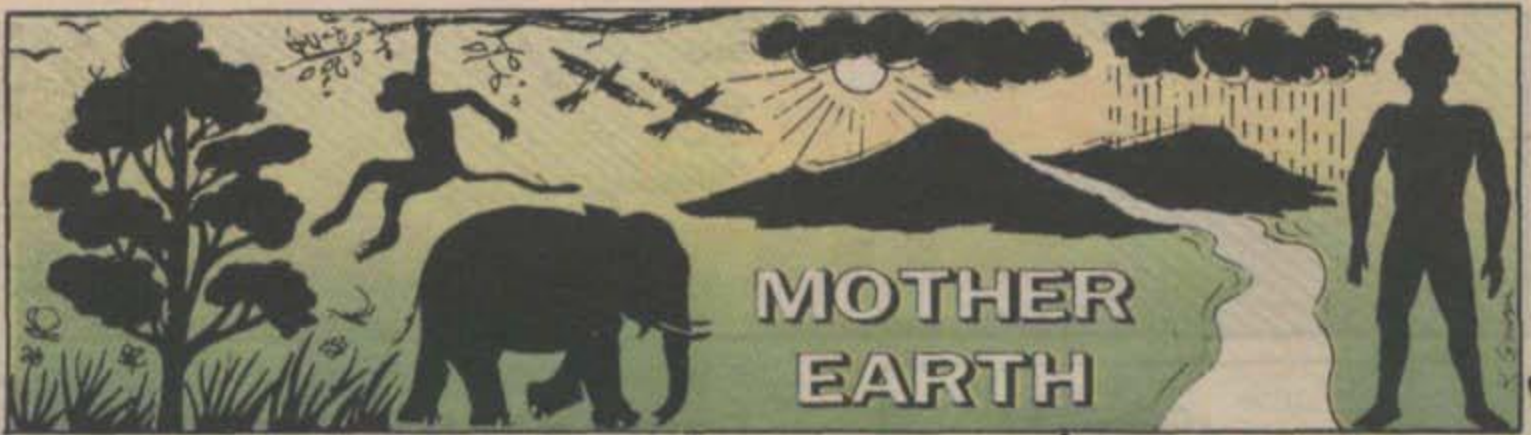
Hanuman then heard an

angelic voice. "What Swarchala had told you is all true. Matsya Vallabha is your son. You should accept them both." Matsya Vallabha prostrated before his father. Hanuman took him in an affectionate embrace.

"Our son has been enslaved by Mahiravana," wailed Swarchala. "I've been told that he would become a free man the moment he meets his father." She then asked Hanuman what had taken him to Patala. When he explained his purpose, she advised him to meet Chandra-sena and find out more about Mahiravana and his secrets. "She's a devotee of Rama, and will certainly help you in your mission." She then went away accompanied by her son.

—To continue





OUR GREEN GREEN FRIENDS

If the hills have been our blue guardians, the trees have been our green friends. When the primitive man needed food, he depended on two sources—the animals and birds on the one hand and the trees and creepers on the other.

To kill an animal or to catch a bird was not easy. Out to kill an animal, the hunter was often wounded if not by the animal itself, by other obstacles. He grew tired running after it. But look at the other sources of his food—the tree or the creeper. He has only to extend his hand and the fruit is in his grip. He has only to dig a little and the edible root is discovered.

After man's hunger was satisfied, he looked for shelter. Sometimes the shade of a tree served that purpose; then he learnt to build his hut with the help of the wood from the tree. To protect himself from flood or stray beasts, he built his hut even on wide branches of large trees.

Then he learnt how to make use of fire for cooking or for lighting his way or hut at night. Again what should come handy for use but dry branches of trees or leaves?

After meeting his bare physical needs, or simultaneously, man was waking up to his sense of beauty. Who again brought him the earliest help in this regard? Was it not the creeper over his hut or the trees around it bursting with colourful, fragrant flowers with the coming of spring? Flowers have been the most intimate objects of beauty for man forever.

Thus, the tree, the plant, the creeper, have been man's friends and helpers from the earliest times—in countless ways. We must take very serious note of this truth. We will speak more about forests and trees again next month.

Sports Snippets



Lion and football

The 10th Jawaharlal Nehru Gold Cup International Football Tournament was on at the Nehru Stadium in Madras last January. The mascot, Leo, was very much present there. If you take a good look at the drawing, you'll be able to guess why Leo the lion was chosen as the mascot. If you can't, here's the answer: lion is the king of animals, while football is the king of games! Football is also very much a masculine game—rugged—“requiring agility and strength”, and these qualities can be seen in the lion also. Leo was clad in green, with a golden vest. Incidentally, green and gold were also the colour combination of the vests worn by the members of the Indian team.

‘Maradona Junior’

One day, at the Nehru Stadium, Korea was meeting Bolivia. The crowd appeared to be reserving all the applause for Korea's Kim Gwang Min. Came the interval and the two teams were either relaxing or warming up for the second half. Suddenly, there was pin-drop silence in the stadium as all eyes were riveted on a little boy who had walked into the stadium and started bouncing a ball “like a parched pea”. At times the ball appeared as if it was glued to his head or knee while he made it “dance to his tune” with perfect control. A junior edition of Diego Maradona? wondered the football ‘buffs’ among the crowd. He was none other than 9-year-old



Somesh from Bangalore, son of a famous Indian goalkeeper. Seven years ago, Sivanesan was watching the World Cup on the TV and was unable to take his eyes off the Argentinian who was flipping the ball from one shoulder to the other, exhibiting his immaculate control. Somesh was sitting by his side, and then and there the father decided he would make his son another 'juggler' like Maradona.

In the seven years since then, Somesh has fashioned out to be just that. Sivanesan himself is in charge of the boy's training and his ambition is to make him an international player. The World Cup waits for you, Somesh!

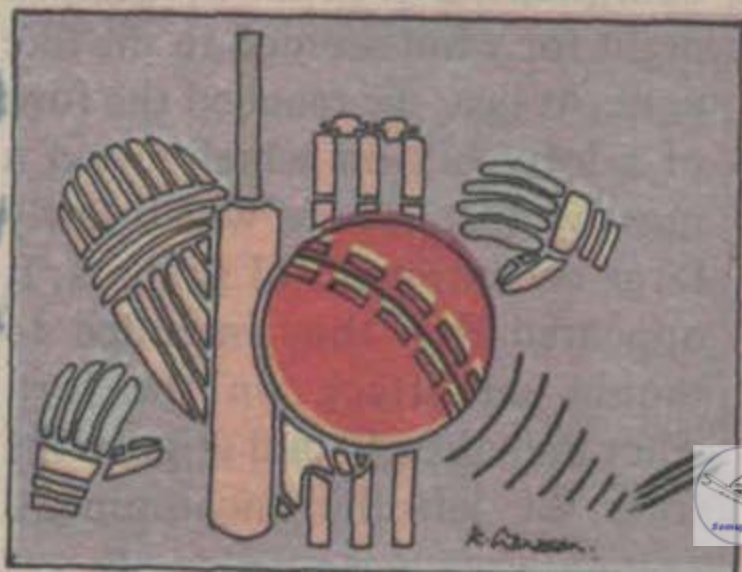
On cricket "Everest"

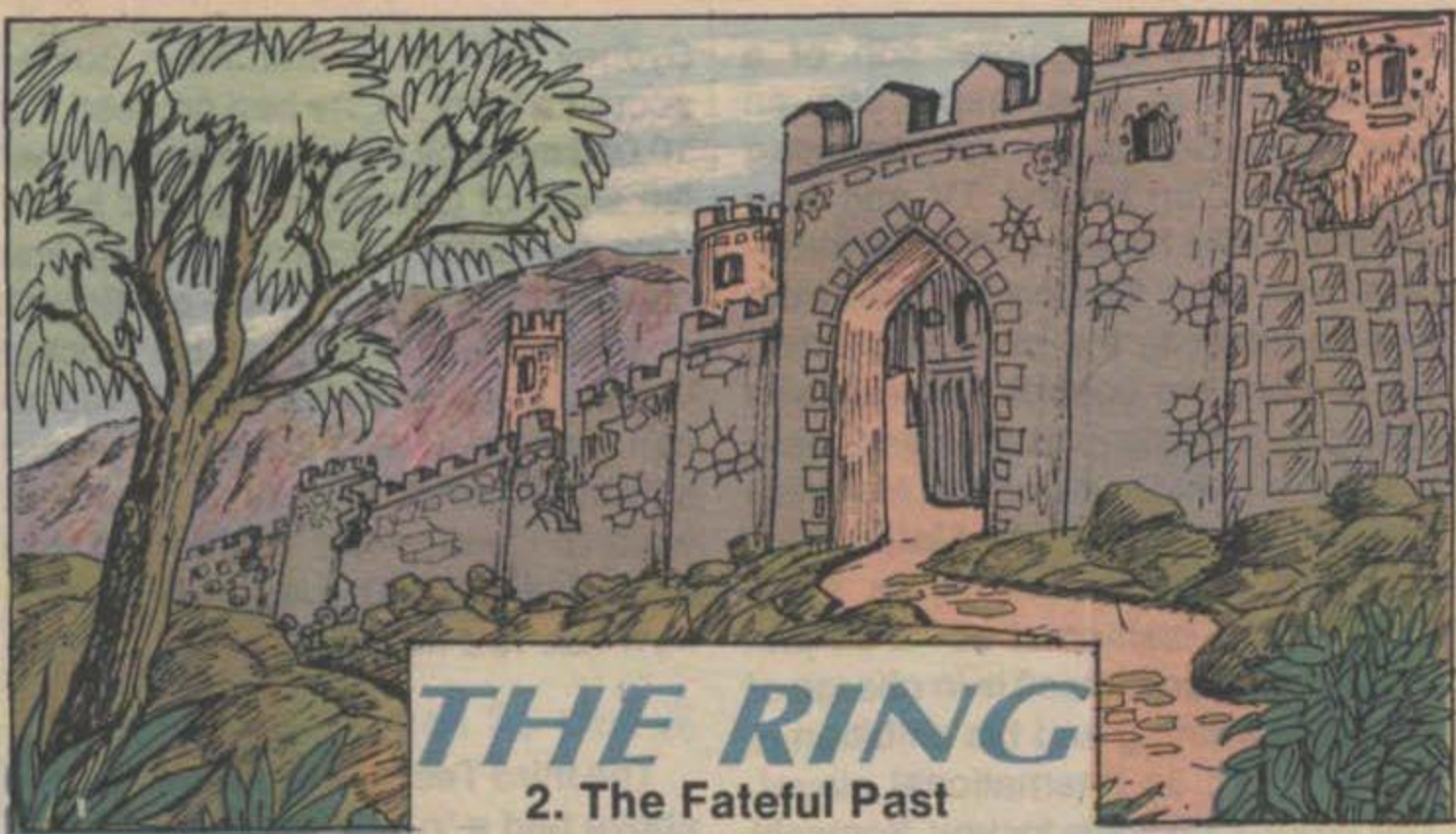
The world record is with India—with Sunil Gavaskar, to be exact—10,122 runs in Test Cricket. Early in January, Australia's captain, Allan Border, came very near, even toppling, that record. Australia were on the first innings against W. Indies in the

Sydney Test, and when Allan Border scored a lusty 74, he had crossed the 10,000 mark by 53 runs. However, that fell short of Gavaskar's record by 69 runs. Gavaskar is now retired from first class cricket, and 37-year-old Border is almost at the end of his cricket career. It looks as though Gavaskar can lean back with the world record safe in his hands. Of course, he did not wait to "welcome" Border to the exclusive "10,000-runs-club", which now has *two* members.

A run of records!

The third Test at Sydney mentioned above had a 'run' of records. Australia's David Boon passed the 5,000-run mark, while Mark Taylor crossed 3,000 runs in Tests. In the first innings, Australia scored 503 and West Indies 606—the first time two sides were scoring more than 500 runs in the first innings in any Test in Australia. It was certain that the match was heading for a draw, so Australia played the second innings like a "batting practice" and scored 117 without loss at stumps—it was the highest opening Test stand by Australia against any W. Indies team in Sydney.





THE RING

2. The Fateful Past

(The narrator comes to settle down in Pune in a house overlooking, at a distance, the Sinhagad fortress. His friend, Dr. Sathe, tells him how Sivaji's General, Malsure, had lost his life while capturing the fortress. Dr. Sathe is to go abroad for a month and hands to his friend an unusually heavy antique ring for safe custody. One evening, the narrator sees a Maharashtrian gentleman coming up the stairs. His old-fashioned dress attracts his astonished attention. When he goes to receive him, he finds that the man has disappeared. Another morning, he appears again only to disappear the next minute. He comes a third time during a stormy night and the narrator follows him. They mount two horses tied outside. Now read on...)

It was pitch dark. The sky was overcast with dark clouds, with the moon and the stars hidden behind them. We rode in the dark night for what seemed to me like ages. At last, we reached the foot of a lofty hill on which stood a massive fort. There was a fairly large encampment of soldiers. It appeared that they intended to mount an attack on the fort. They had already laid siege to the fort. We left the encampment,

skirted the hill, and tried to reach the other side. We rode through thick undergrowth and towering trees, which looked like demons in the dark night. The path was strewn with boulders and stones. Finally, we reached a small clearing in the forest on the other side. The leader of the expeditionary forces, with six of his followers, were waiting there. He looked like a very high ranking Maratha General. The rich dress



and the decorated turban attracted my attention. More striking was the jewel-studded hilt of the sword he was carrying.

They held a war council that lasted half-an-hour. They decided to climb the hill to reach the fort. I looked up. In the dark night, the fort was like a grey silhouette in the sky. It looked as inaccessible as an eagle's nest, and the rockface was sheer vertical. It appeared suicidal even to venture climbing from that side. But they had other ideas. They started the climb in right earnest. They were as quick and sure-footed as the mountain goats. I followed them, but it was almost impossible for me to keep pace with the dare-devils. I was panting and it appeared as if my lungs would burst. Tufts of grass and rockweed came off in my hands. With every step I thought I might slip and fall down hundreds of feet. But, like all nightmares, this climb was over after about an hour, and we reached the top of the hill. We climbed the fort wall. It was comparatively easy after the hazardous climb. At last we reached one of the towers on the



wall. We clambered in through the doors and windows. There were five guards inside. The diffused light of a lantern lit the tower room. The guards were startled at the sudden appearance of so many armed intruders. Swords and spears struck against each other as the men fought. The guards were overcome after a skirmish. Two lay dead, with swords pierced through their bodies, and the rest were taken prisoners. Two of our companions ran towards a postern gate and opened it.

According to prior arrange-





ment, the expeditionary force started pouring in through the gate. In the meantime, the garrison in the Fort was alerted by the light of the torches and the clink of swords and the commotion generated by the fight in the guard tower. The soldiers from the garrison started pouring out in their effort to drive out the invaders. The attackers rushed down the stairs leading to the courtyard. Suddenly, hell was let loose, what with the clashing of swords, the war cries of the opposing soldiers, and the shrieks of the wounded. My companion

and his leader were standing nearby. They unsheathed their swords and joined the fray. Then, in the light of the flickering torches, I saw for a fleeting second the ring in the middle finger of my companion. The ruby sparkled in the flickering light. I did not find it difficult to recognize it. But this ring was in the locker of my house! How then could it come here? I could not find any key to the puzzle.

By this time, the battle was raging in full fury in the courtyard of the fort. Cries and shouts rent the air. More soldiers kept pouring out of the rooms in the courtyard. The clank of swords and spears echoed off the wall. Suddenly, one arm of the leader was severed by a sword thrust from a defender. Still, he continued to lead the expeditionary forces. By that time, the defending forces were thrust back and it appeared they would not be able to hold on for long. They were about to yield to the invaders. Most of the defenders were dead or injured, and many of the rest surrendered to the invading force. The leader had now fainted from the loss of blood. My



companion and a few others helped him to lie down. Suddenly, a spear hurled by one of the defenders pierced the chest of my companion. He rolled to the ground. His shirt was soaked in blood. Two of his companions came to his help. With a feeble hand, he brought out a small box from inside his garment, and took out his ring and gave them to one of his companions. It was the same ring; the ruby was glittering in the torch light. He mumbled something to his companion. He could then say no more; life was ebbing out of him. Suddenly, there was the sound of

a big explosion from within the fort. It must have been the gun powder store blowing up. This was followed by a more severe explosion. I was hurled away by the sheer force of it. My head hit a stone, and I lost consciousness.

When I came to, I found myself lying on the floor, near the cot in my bedroom. There was a swelling on my head, probably because of the fall from the cot. I tried to recollect all the happenings and attempted to put them in order. Had all that happened in my dream? Had I hurt myself dreaming about the expedition, the battle, and the capture of the





fort? But how could it be? There was that man and that ring. Suddenly I felt annoyed. I decided it was time I got rid of the ring.

I did not have to wait for long. Dr. Sathe arrived before noon. His plane had reached Bombay early in the morning and he straight away drove down to Pune. He came to meet me immediately. Without even looking at him, I opened the cupboard, took out the box containing the ring, and handed it to him. He profusely apologized, and then narrated the story of the ring.

One evening, in his dispensary, he was visited by a middle-aged man. He refused to disclose his identity. He looked respectable, though he seemed to have fallen on bad days, of late. The man was in dire need of some money, but he was not willing to take it without giving something in exchange. Dr. Sathe felt pity for him and, though he knew the attendant danger, he accepted the ring from a total stranger in exchange for the money he gave him. From then on, the apparition of the Maratha gentleman had appeared before Dr. Sathe many a time! But he had never witnessed the night-long drama which I myself had experienced.

After reaching Bombay early morning, he was feeling uneasy about the ring and, therefore, had rushed back to Pune.

According to Dr. Sathe, the ring must have belonged to a trusted companion of Tanaji Malsure, who also must have lost his life along with Tanaji during the siege of Sinhagad. Some descendant of his family must have been the person who had parted with the ring for money. But then, why should the





Maratha warrior appear every now and then as if to claim the ring from Dr. Sathe, as though it was in wrongful possession? I did not feel quite convinced by Dr. Sathe's explanation and implored him, "It won't be proper to keep the ring in your possession anymore."

One day, I was accompanying Dr. Sathe to his house on his invitation for lunch. On the way, we had to cross the Sambhaji bridge on the river Mula. I asked him to stop the car on the bridge. We got down from the car. The

river was in full spate. In the distance, we could see Sinhagad etched in the sky. I did not have to tell anything to Dr. Sathe. He took out the box, pulled out the ring from it, and dropped it in the swirling waters of the Mula. It made a tiny splash and then got lost in the water, probably never to be found again.

The apparition of the Maratha gentleman was also not seen after that!

(Concluded)

—Asit Chandra Chandra and
Abhijit Chandra Chandra

A habit is a shirt made of iron.

A man without a smiling face must not open a shop.



Of forgers and swindlers

If the 'maker of false coins' is a *coiner*, who is the 'printer of false currency'? asks A. Babu of Nagercoil. First, an explanation of the word *currency*. It means, 'that which circulates', especially the money of a country. Now, money can be in two forms: coins and paper-money, more popularly termed as notes or currency notes. There are people indulging in counterfeiting both coins and notes. The first will need a 'mint' where the fake (a better word than 'false') coins can be "pressed" or "stamped". Anyone who is engaged in this crime is a 'coiner'. Making of counterfeit notes requires a printing machine. Before actual printing, the design of the note(s) will have to be copied or forged. So, these criminals are called 'forgers'. The products are known as counterfeit coins and counterfeit notes.

Jyotiranjana Biswal of Durgapur recently came across an expression, "to see the colour of a person's money" and wonders whether money has any colour at all. The idiom simply means 'to make sure that a person has enough money to pay for an article or articles that he or she intends buying'. We often hear of people *posing* as VIPs and shopping in places where they will not be easily recognised, asking the shopowners to send the items they have 'bought' over to their places of stay, and either absconding with the items or not making proper payments. While in the shops, these 'con men' or 'swindlers' may often flash a wad of currency notes in their purse, but invariably avoid making any payment on the spot. The glib shopowners who may have been carried away by their glib talk can be best described as having failed to see the colour of the person's (prospective buyer or customer) money!





The One Stronger

Sabaripur was once part of the present Karnataka. King Sabhalnath had, among his courtiers, scholars and warriors. One day, the court had a visitor—Mamalla the wrestler. “I’m coming here after visiting several kingdoms where I challenged many, defeated them in contests, and won several prizes and awards. In fact, such contests are my pastime. Now that I’m here, I wish to throw a challenge. Is there anyone in this kingdom stronger than I? Anyone bold enough to fight with me? If there is none, you may send me away with a reward,” Mamalla told Sabhalnath, arrogantly.

One of his ministers winked at the king. “Your Majesty, there can be none to match our own Gundappa. This challenger will tremble if he only sees Gundappa. Fortunately for him,

Gundappa is away from Sabaripur, and is expected only in another two or three days. Let’s ask our friend here whether he would wait for Gundappa and fight with him. We should not allow him to eat dust.”

The minister was loud enough for Mamalla. “Did you say two or three days?” said Mamalla. “I don’t mind waiting for your man. I’m determined to defeat him and go back only after winning prizes and rewards from this kingdom.”

The king agreed to his staying back awaiting Gundappa’s return. Mamalla, at the same time, had apprehensions about Gundappa and his strength, especially after he listened to the minister praising him sky-high and even hinting that he might have to eat dust at the hands of Gundappa.

The next morning he saw a lot



of hectic activity going on in the house opposite where he was staying. He particularly watched the doors being widened. Out of sheer curiosity, he went up to the workers.

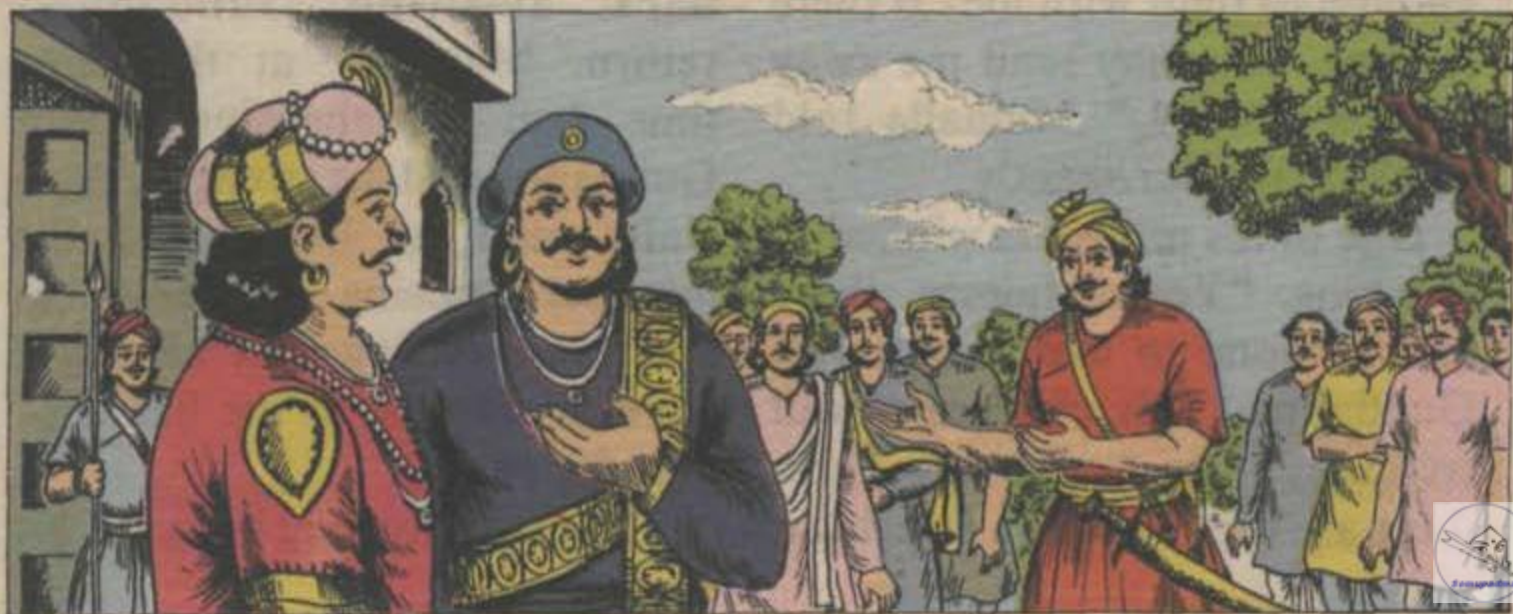
"Oh! You don't know?" they replied. "Gundappa is returning and is expected to occupy this house. He can't get in through small doors. That's why they are all being changed."

Mamalla heard their chief tell them, "See that the flooring is redone properly. It should be strong enough to take the weight of his footsteps. Otherwise, the whole floor will sink and the building itself will collapse. He won't then spare anyone of us. One blow from him will send all of us flying. So, be careful!"

Now, fear began stalking Mamalla. He saw cartloads of butter, ghee, eggs, dates, and

other delicacies arriving at the place. The next morning, he also saw a horse-drawn vehicle parked in front of the house. There were twenty horses to draw it. Soon a crowd collected and shouted, "May Gundappa live long! May Gundappa win the fight tomorrow!"

A while later, King Sabhalnath and a retinue of ministers reached the place to receive Gundappa. Mamalla was now certain that if he were to meet Gundappa, it would be his end. He took to his heels, making sure that he was not being noticed. But one of the workers did see him running away, and went and told his chief who, in turn, told the minister and word also reached the king. "Our plan has succeeded, your majesty!" said the minister with a smile.





LET US KNOW

Why is Antarctica a continent and not the Arctic?

—S. Loknath, Visakhapatnam

There is no Arctic continent, because it is merely pack ice surrounding the north Pole and floating on the Arctic Ocean. Pack ice, which breaks into ice floes in summer, is carried by the south-flowing current into the Atlantic Ocean as icebergs. Antarctica is a vast (13,727,000 sq.km) plateau, which has extensive mineral resources. The word continent means a large mass of land. The north Pole lies in a waste of water. When its upper layers are frozen, they form a 'false' land.

Why is Dead Sea so called?

—T.G. Girish, Bangalore

The Dead Sea is not a sea as we understand of the word. It is a large lake, lying some 394 metres below the sea-level, partly in Israel and partly in Jordan. The Jordan is the chief river entering it, yet it has no outlet to the sea! Something like a dead end!

What are the two movements, fascism and Nazism? Are they different?

—Lavanya Ganesh and Jalkumar, Karwar

Any system holding authoritarian views is generally termed fascism, which was the name given to the totalitarian nationalist movement founded in Italy by Mussolini in 1919. Fascism protected the prevailing social order by suppressing the working class movement. Nazism was the movement started by the Nazi Party, which was originally the German Workers' Party, also founded in 1919 and later led by Adolf Hitler from 1921 to 1945. The Nazi was thus a fascist political party. Nazism was an ideology based on racism (Hitler extolled the Aryan race), nationalism, and the supremacy of the state over the individual. The atrocities committed by Nazi Germany and other fascist countries brought discredit to fascism.

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An ass is beautiful to an ass, and a pig is beautiful to a pig.

— John Ray

God made the country, and man made the town.

— William Cowper

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— R.J. Campbell



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